

**SOME MISTAKES AND PERILS OF HIGHER
CRITICISM
FROM A PREACHER'S STANDPOINT**

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A LECTURE

GIVEN BY

REV. J. B. SAUNDERS, M.D., D.D.

OF LONDON, ONT.,

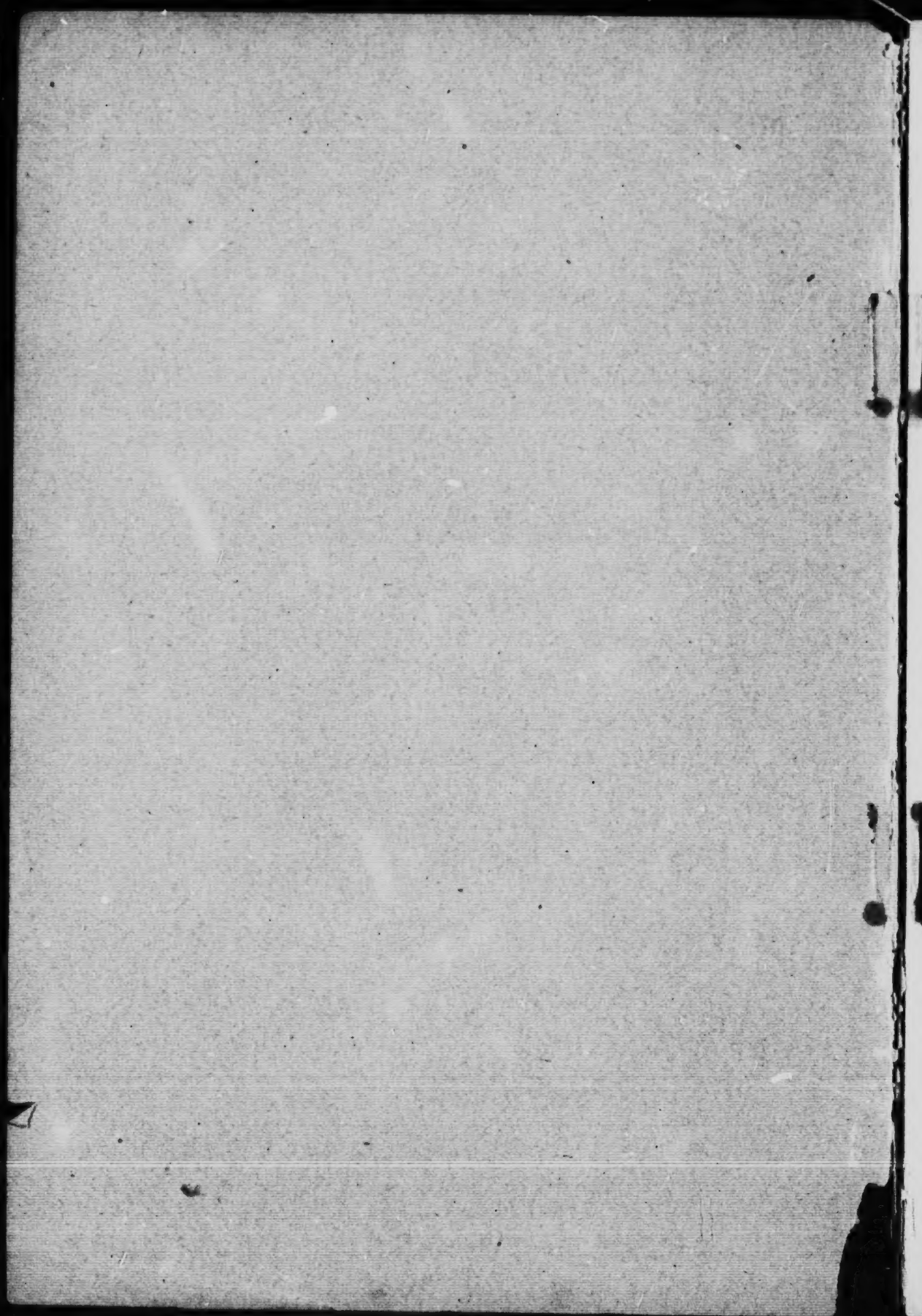
**BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL UNION OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE OF
THE METHODIST CHURCH, JUNE, 1900. AT
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**TORONTO: WILLIAM BRIGGS**

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## SOME MISTAKES AND PERILS OF HIGHER CRITICISM FROM A PREACHER'S STANDPOINT.

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I AM sure that I may draw largely on your sympathy to-night. You will recognize the vastness of the field of thought to which our theme invites us, and understand how impossible it will be for me, in the time I can take, to deal adequately with the many phases of this much discussed subject. You will admit the necessity of my keeping to a very few points, and if I should not refer to many features of the discussion in which you are specially interested, my excuse must be, not that I do not recognize their importance, but that my time is limited and that I have selected those which seem to be most vital and may be most helpful to all. I shall have to take it for granted that you are all fairly acquainted with the ground over which we travel; that your reading has familiarized you with the terminology employed and the principal authors from whom I may quote,

or to whom I may refer. I shall be glad if you will permit me to use the alphabetical characters usually employed when referring to the redactors and compilers who have been credited with the composition in its present form of various portions of the sacred text. I shall be compelled to condense my arguments into a very few words, and in quoting from authors to give but the words which are necessary to make the point clear. If any question should arise as to the authority or full text of the quotation, I may say that in the fuller notes from which I have condensed this paper, I have noted the author, the book and page from which, I have quoted, and shall be glad to furnish these to any who may question the correctness of the quotation, or who may desire to look more fully into the position taken.

It may be well to determine what is meant in this paper by "Higher Criticism." The term is rapidly losing the meaning which was first attached to it, and becoming so broad and vague that for purposes of clear thinking and perspicuous reasoning it is almost useless, and other more definite terms are supplanting it. "Higher Criticism" is rather an unfortunate term. It has an air of affectation about it; it smacks of pedantry and undue assumption. But it was not first used in that sense. It was employed to distinguish it from a more general form of criticism called lower or textual criticism.

"Higher Criticism" is a critical inquiry into the nature, origin and dates of the documents of the Bible



and a close investigation into their value and credibility. Or, as Prof. Briggs puts it, "Having secured the best text of the writings, 'Higher Criticism' devotes itself to the higher task of considering them as to their integrity, authenticity, literary form and reliability." It is by no means a new thing. It is probably as old as the Bible itself. We cannot think of men in any age taking these books as a revelation from God without critical inquiry as to their origin and credibility. And this study of the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred Scriptures has continued through the centuries. Paley discussed in his *Horae Paulinae* similar questions. No one should object to the most thorough and careful examination and criticism of the Scriptures which have been given to us to guide us in the way of life. Least of all should we object, whose special work it is to examine and explore them; nay, rather we should strive to excel in higher and lower criticism and criticism of every kind, provided it be genuine, frank and reverent. It is not, then, to any true criticism that we take exception, but to some of the methods employed, some of the conclusions reached, and some of the positions taken, by many of the Higher Critics.

We often hear it said in a general way, "These men are only careful students; they do not destroy the Bible. They are believers in its inspiration. They declare that once they have reached these conclusions the Bible is more real, radiant and helpful to them than ever before; that it flashes with a new meaning



and glows with a richer beauty." But a glance at some of the positions taken will show us how utterly untenable is this ground.

Kuenen says: "The Hexateuch is utterly unhistorical, and cannot have been committed to writing until centuries after Moses' time. Legend plays a greater part than history in the accounts we possess of Moses. As a rule they (the Scriptures) concern themselves very little with the question whether what they relate really happened or not. The Exodus, the wanderings, the passage of the Jordan and the settlement in Canaan as described in the Hexateuch are simply impossible."

Wellhausen says: "The legends about the patriarchs and primitive times cannot be assigned to a very early date. The Pentateuch is dressed up in archaic fashion. It is full of historical fiction—all confidence in it is lost."

Prof. Cheyne says: "Deuteronomy was composed by no possibility earlier than the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. There never was an historical individual among the ancestors of the Israelites called Abram."

Prof. Driver says: "None of the historians of the Bible claim supernatural enlightenment for the materials of their narratives."

Prof. Harper says: "The Old Testament is composed of different stories of the same events joined together by editors who did not have insight sufficient to enable them to see that they were all the time com-

mitting grave blunders, and they felt no hesitancy in altering the originals with which they were working."

Dillman, Robertson Smith, Ladd and Briggs all agree very generally with these conclusions. How, then, is it possible for men to flatter themselves that because of positions thus taken, the Bible becomes to them more precious, luminous and divine than ever before?

The standpoint from which I invite you to look at this matter is that of the preacher. The professor in the college has his special work, and necessarily devotes himself to the minute examination of certain questions that are interesting, academic, theoretical or abstract. But we are in the field; we are where these theories are put to the test and their working character is tried. It is in theology as in medicine. In the medical class-room, fanciful theories and new discoveries are thoroughly canvassed and carefully examined. Possibilities and probabilities are weighed and sometimes advocated, but it is not unusual for the professor to stop in the midst of the experiment or the argument, and say, "This is all very well for the class-room, but practice is a very different thing. Try no experiments there. Keep down to well-known working lines, for human lives are at stake."

So in theological halls, many questions may come under review and may be discussed with profit, but we who are in the field and doing the practical work of saving men and leading them to Christ, must remember that human souls are in our care and we

must keep to reliable data and solid truth. We must not air unfledged theories, vague speculations and wild conjectures when men are looking to us for the bread of life. This does not imply that we should not study and criticise, that there should not be on our part the most unfettered freedom of thought and inquiry on Biblical questions; but we must avoid, on the one hand, the temptation to win popularity and be thought scholarly by flaunting new ideas, posing as advanced thinkers and presenting ill-grounded and unproven opinions to the people; and, on the other hand, the danger of falling into the rut of the idle and thoughtless, despising true criticism and earnest, honest research. We must know that our message is the King's message, that the promises we make has the King's authority, that the promises we repeat have His *imprimatur*. The moment that a man stands before a trembling brother convinced of his lost condition, inquiring the way of life, he must know that he is giving him the Word of Life that is able to save his soul.

It is not enough to say, "Truth is mighty and will prevail." Even if Truth cannot be destroyed, men can be. Our one business is to save men; therefore, errors must be detected by us, and exposed and denounced lest men be led away by them into darkness and doubt.

An impression is sought to be made in some quarters that these are questions adapted only for the scholars, and should be left to the experts and the

specialist. That, too, is a grievous error. The Bible is our text-book, our authority for offering salvation to men. Scholarship is a valuable auxiliary, but only an auxiliary. The translator must be a scholar, but once the right rendering is secured the learned linguist has no advantage over other men; nay, it often happens that the expert and the specialist is unqualified for the more comprehensive task. The specialist everywhere is prone to lose sight of the broader aspect of things in his constant examination of the minute and the specific. Dr. Pusey rightly says: "It is an infelicity of the German mind that it is acute in detail rather than comprehensive in grasping resemblances." So a new kind of priestcraft is arising amongst us. Men still love pre-eminence, and calmly tell us that these things must be left to the experts, that their verdict must be sought, that we must not dare to sift and weigh evidence for ourselves, but lean on their opinions. Other forms of priestcraft have come and gone, and this, too, will, I doubt not, follow in the long procession and be buried in the sands of its own wrecked ambitions.

Again, we are told that the questions at issue are not vital, that they do not affect the general teaching of the Word, that the great saving truths are just as present in the Bible whether we accept or reject the conclusions of these higher critics. That may, of course, be admitted on some points. The authorship of a book may not be vital to its acceptance as a divine revelation. But if that book announces its

author and Christ sanctions his claim, then the matter becomes vital, not only to the book itself, but to Christianity and to the divine character of Christ. To say that it is of little importance when or by whom the Pentateuch was written, so long as it can be shown to be true, implies that there is nothing in it relating to its age or origin. But this is not the case. It claims to have been originated by Moses. Most of the inspired writers admit its claim. Christ endorses it. Then, to deny its claim becomes a vital matter that involves the credit and authority of the entire Bible and saps the foundations of Christianity. If the Pentateuch is not to be believed when it refers again and again to Moses as its author, when is it to be believed? If it is not true and accurate here, where is it true and accurate? If we cannot go to men with an unequivocal "Thus saith the Lord" on our lips, then our labor will be largely in vain and we shall spend our strength for nought.

Cover up the attack as you please, assure men of the harmlessness of the position as you may, for one I cannot shake off the impression that it is, as one has said, "The Grecian strategy over again." When the Greeks could not capture Troy by force of arms they resorted to guile. They built a large wooden horse, which they professed to worship, but afterward apparently abandoned. The Trojans brought it into their city, hoping that it would bring them success, but within the wooden structure were armed warriors who, rushing out under cover of night, opened the

gates for the enemy to enter. So this, I believe, will only open the gates to whole battalions of unbelief. Laocoon's advice was: "Distrust the Greeks, even bearing gifts;" and we shall find the advice to be invaluable to us in the present controversy.

But again our opponents, with an arch look, reply, "What if it is true? It is useless to cling to error. It is unmanly not to look at the truth. It is childish to shut our eyes to the light." We have no hesitation in granting that, but this may be urged on either side. The question cannot be begged in that manner. Calling a view erroneous does not make it so, and which of these views is correct is precisely the question in debate. One feels like saying with Dr. Salmon, when addressing the students of Trinity College, Dublin: "I feel ashamed of repeating such nonsense, but it is necessary that you should know the things that are said, for you may meet these German dreams retailed as sober truth by writers in this country, many of whom imagine that it would be a confession of inability to keep pace with the progress of critical science if they ventured to test by English common-sense the successive schemes by which the German aspirants after fame seek to gain a reputation for ingenuity."

Another argument often presented is: "All scholars accept these views, the great thinkers of the age hold them. If you desire any reputation for scholarship, do not dare to reject those conclusions." That is not true. Scholars differ widely, and there are great

thinkers on both sides. The question cannot be decided by counting noses or blazoning great names. Patient, prayerful investigation of the facts is the only true course to pursue.

Look for a moment at the two theories of the origin of the Old Testament. A supercilious fling at Higher Criticism will not destroy it, nor will a contemptuous sniff at traditionalism overthrow that. A pedantic or dogmatic assertion will have no permanent effect either way. Let us not cling wildly to traditionalism like a dervish to his fetish, nor yet clutch nervously at untenable positions because they are buttressed up by names of great scholars and learned professors, but let us manfully and patiently examine the claims and sift the evidence for ourselves. The matter has been so threshed out and every side has been so fully presented to us that there is scarcely a scrap of information on the subject that is not as available to us as to the most learned. So that it now becomes a question of ability to sift and weigh evidence. With ordinary intelligence, patient investigation, frankness of mind and honesty of purpose every one of us may come to conclusions just as likely to be sound and correct as the most erudite. Fads are contagious in every line of thought, and it is not uncommon to find men in this country accepting as facts what in the very birthplace of these fads have never been regarded as more than theories, and still are acknowledged to be unproven. The cause of consumption is very generally attributed to the



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bacillus tuberculosis, but Dr. Gibbes, a very high authority, denies that bacteria is a causative factor in disease. He not only says that the idea of dodging a bacillus here for one thing, and another somewhere else for another, is absurd and simply a fad, but he absolutely denies the fact that these micro-organisms are always present in disease. He says: "I have conducted hundreds of autopsies on consumptives without finding a trace of the bacillus." In Germany, Dr. Koch's theories are regarded as theories only, but in this country they are held too frequently to be the facts, and so it is with regard to many of the German notions of the origin of the Scriptures.

The two theories, baldly put, are these:

1. That Genesis was compiled by Moses is the traditional view. No theologian ever imagined that he received the patriarchal and antediluvian history ready-made from heaven. He did not need to receive historical truths by revelation. He had to search for them, gather them up from earlier traditions and documents, and arrange them in concrete form; but traditionalists hold that he was inspired and divinely aided in his work. Moses' genius, transcendent as it was, could not have done this alone, but his genius, divinely inspired and aided, could and did accomplish it.

2. That the four remaining books of the Pentateuch are substantially the work of Moses and his helpers. He was an eye-witness of most of the transactions, and, therefore, knew the truth of the things he recorded, and in Deuteronomy he amplified

certain laws that needed amplification and emphasizing, incorporated his addresses and songs, and with the exception of the last chapter or two, which probably at one time formed the prelude to the book of Joshua, Deuteronomy and the whole Pentateuch came forth with his *imprimatur*.

3. Judges is a compilation made probably by Samuel from contemporary records, family memorials and other existing records and documents.

4. The four books of Kings are compilations, consisting in part of the compositions of contemporary prophets, official documents, sacred and secular, put together and added to by seers and prophets of whom Jeremiah was the last and perhaps the principal agent.

5. Chronicles were compiled probably by Ezra from the books of Kings and other documents at his command.

6. Ezra and Nehemiah were written by the authors whose names they bear.

7. That the prophetical writings were the products of those men whose names are attached to them, that they contain portions of contemporary history, personal records, divine messages, and predictions of future events.

Lastly, that these books have been handed down from ancient times by copyists, and that notes, archæological and explanatory, of various dates, have crept into the text, but that these, except in a few

instances, are readily discerned and do not seriously vitiate the general trend of the writings.

The opposing theory, known as the Analytic, may be summed up thus :

1. The Old Testament did not assume its present form till a late date in the period of the exile.

2. The Hexateuch shows at least three strata and distinctive peculiarities which have been revised and re-edited several times by several unknown persons.

3. That these three strata form a composite history made up of fragments distinguished by names applied to God and dating from the later kings and prophets. That Deuteronomy was compiled in the days of Manasseh or Josiah by some unknown writer or writers. That it is a mere fiction founded perhaps on traditions, and that the tabernacle never existed. That instead of the tabernacle being the prototype of the temple, the temple suggested the fiction of the tabernacle ; that the earlier narratives are mere myths, the history is largely idealized ; that Moses never lived, but was the creation of a vivid imagination ; that both Abraham and Moses were merely ideas personified ; that in the compiling of the Pentateuch and some other books, from seven to twelve unknown authors and redactors have been engaged, and some pretend to be able to apportion to each his share, even in some instances to the dividing of a sentence in half ; that these authors lived between the ages of Hezekiah and Ezra and projected their ideas into the past, so that Genesis and Exodus do not portray patriarchal

and Mosaic ages, but the times of the writers themselves, who painted on the canvas of the past the ideas of the then present. So we have the Elohist narrative and the Jehovistic story book, then another who blends both, and these are called by letters of the alphabet E.J. and J.E., P & D, etc. It is also held that these did not come into their present shape at once, but were separate works. First, there was the priestly code, comprising Leviticus, portions of Exodus and Numbers according as they wrote in the priestly spirit. Second, there was the book of the covenant, comprising Exodus 21-23, and other passages relating to covenants represented by the letter Q, meaning four. Then Deuteronomy and a book of Holiness, and other fragments and interpolations gathered by any number of redactors. This, I think, will be admitted to be a fair presentation of the case of the Analytic Critics.

Who can believe that any book was ever written after that manner or criticised after that fashion? If these claims are true, then our Bible is the most accidental conglomeration of old-time sagas that ever saw the light of day. Some have printed these in colors so as to distinguish the various scraps at a glance, and what has aptly been called the rainbow Bible has appeared—a kind of Joseph's coat of many colors, like that famous garment, doomed, I think, to be a source of confusion and disaster. Two things, I think, have chiefly led up to the adoption of this

latter method of criticism and have dragged many to these unwarranted conclusions.

In the first place there is a materialistic spirit, a disbelief in the supernatural. As Bishop Ellicott shows, "Inability to accept the supernatural is the distinctive feature of this Analytic system." The miraculous is spurned and often ridiculed, and this is little to be wondered at. See its history. The originator of the system was Jean Astruc, a French physician of considerable learning but of profligate life. The French Academy afterward took it up and converted it into an indictment not only of the Mosaic authority of the Pentateuch, but of the supernatural in general. From them it passed into the realm of German rationalism, which was animated by a spirit of antagonism to faith in the supernatural. Graf, Kuenen and Wellhausen were avowed disbelievers in the supernatural. It is a battle between the natural and the supernatural, between faith in God as a mere God of nature and faith in Him also as the God of revelation and grace. These men are disbelievers in miracles, prophecies, inspiration and the Divinity of our Lord and our Jesus Christ. This has colored all their thoughts and writings. They set out with the express object of explaining the rise of the religion of Israel on purely naturalistic grounds, and the result is that they deny the historic trustworthiness of the Pentateuch. Genesis is declared to be a myth, a fiction, a legend, everything but reliable history. Prof. Cheyne even goes so far

as to say that our children should be taught, after a certain age, that Genesis is not history, but a compilation of legendary lore. And Canon Driver declares that none of the historians claim supernatural enlightenment in the Bible for the materials of their narratives.

Another reason for the strain to reach these conclusions lies in the fact that these men are evolutionists. They approach criticism with a firm belief in evolution. They hold that Christianity is the product of evolution, and that it is impossible that such literature, such high conceptions of God and human responsibility should have existed so early in the history of the race. They, therefore, conclude that these writings must be the product of a later and more advanced age.

It is not easy to define evolution. Like Higher Criticism, it has as many phases as the moon and is as constantly changing. It has as many colors as the chameleon, and varies with every change of its surroundings. There is a materialistic evolution which denies everything but matter and motion in the evolutionary processes. There is an agnostic evolution which postulates an unknown and unknowable as the basis and explanation of the process. There is a theistic evolution which assumes a God back of all, working out results along the unalterable line of natural law. These are often confused and confounded together and mixed inextricably with the theory which

is more rational and scriptural, and which may more properly be called the development theory.

True evolution involves the thought that the potency is inherent in the primordial germ or germs, but the development theory admits the idea of an imminent and personal God, interposing at the right juncture and directly unfolding His plan and carrying it forward to the final consummation of His intelligent and beatific purposes. For the former, *i.e.*, the materialistic, agnostic and theistic theories, there is very little ground of certainty. The structure is built on the trestle-work of mere hypothesis. Even theistic evolution favors the precedence of the cell, the egg or the plasm. The primordial germ is a *sine qua non* of evolution. But Moses favors the alternative view, the organism as the fountal source of the seed. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And God created great whales and every living creature that moveth." Here the positions are antipodal. Evolution cries the seed or germ first, Moses cries the creature first and from him the seed that propagates the same kind. Lord Salisbury a year or so ago, when president of the British Association of Science at Oxford, in his annual address said: "There is much disagreement as to the extent to which this common descent can be assumed."

Darwin himself believed that all the animals were descended from at most four or five progenitors.



Haeckel looked upon primitive mud as the probable ancestor of the whole fauna and flora of this planet, but there are two or three objections (and these apply as much to theistic evolution as to the others) that to me seem insurmountable and destructive of every theory of evolution. Lord Kelvin was the first to point out that the amount of time required by advocates of the theory for working out the processes they had imagined, could not be conceded without assuming the existence of a totally different set of natural laws from those with which we are acquainted. Setting aside the arguments from the resistance of the tides, that would require great scientific knowledge to follow, the argument from the refrigeration of the earth makes this clear. We all know that hot things cool gradually according to their substance or mass. It is evident from the increase of heat as we descend below the surface, that the earth is still cooling, and as its rate of cooling is fairly well known we can calculate how hot it was so many millions of years ago. If at any time it was hotter by fifty degrees F. than it is now, life would have been impossible upon the planet, and so we can fix a date before which life on the earth cannot have existed. Lord Kelvin limited this period to one hundred millions of years, and Prof. Tait reduced that to ten millions of years. Evolutionists, however, have lavished their millions of centuries, and indeed their theories require all this elbow-room. If we think of that vast distance over which Darwin conducts us from

the first jelly-fish lying on the primeval shore to man as we know him, if we reflect that the prodigious change requisite to transform the one into the other is made up of a chain of generations, each advancing by a minute variation from the form of its predecessor, and if we remember that for the last three thousand years (our historic period) this progressive variation has not advanced by a single step perceptible to our eyes in respect to man or animals or plants with which we are familiar, we must admit that for a chain so vast the evolutionists require thousands of millions of years for the accomplishment of the stupendous process. Then we are shut up to the conclusion that the jelly-fish would have dissipated in steam long before he had a chance to evolve into anything that could be regarded as an ancestor for the human race. Therefore, as Lord Salisbury says, the laity may be excused for returning a verdict of "not proven." If in their calculations Lord Kelvin and Prof. Tait be right, where will Prof. Drummond find time and room for his "Ascent of Man," or rather as he should have called it, "The ascent of woman"? Another obstacle lies in the teaching of Moses that God is not only the originator of life, but also that He is the direct cause of the different kinds of life which have subsequently appeared. "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb and fruit tree after his kind, so of every living creature after his kind," not of another kind in the course of time. Thus Moses holds that God and nature worked together; the vital forces of the

world were guided, fortified and supplemented by His supreme force and skill.

The theory of primordial germs, out of which all the other species were evolved, here meets with direct opposition. Moses places unmistakable emphasis on "after his kind." A most extensive series of observations has shown how groundless is the notion of the transmutation of species. There is no well authenticated instance of one species producing another. Nature distinctly condemns the perpetuation of hybrids. The product of the union of two species is generally sterile, and if not so at first it becomes so in a few generations. Environments can bring about marvellous modifications, but have never been known to transmute one species into another. To accept all this, then, as occurring in the period which geology can allow, implies a credulity far more ignoble than the belief in man's higher origin. Indeed, in the bodily structure of the race there is no sign of evolution. Dawson says: "The skulls, great stature and grand development of limbs in the skeletons of the most ancient men of Europe testify to a race more firmly constituted physically than the majority of existing Europeans, and with a development of brain above the European average."

Prof. Boyd Dawkins considers the oldest known human skull to be that of Engis, and Prof. Huxley affirms that that is identical with the European cranium. It is clear that geology and anatomy agree in placing man apart as a new and distinct order of

being. Verily the Mosaic theory comports well with the facts of nature and science.

However, all this opposes the modern view of evolution, and so, with a wave of the hand, Moses and his writings are swept aside as mythical. But what of Jesus Christ? Is He the product of evolution? If it breaks down here, where can it stand? Did environment produce Him? Did the rottenness of society in His day produce His purity? Did the bigotry and narrowness of His nation produce His large-heartedness? Did the hypocrisy and intense selfishness of His day engender His holiness and self-sacrifice? Evolution? What was there ever upon the earth that could develop a sinless Saviour? Before Bethlehem's manger and Calvary's cross the doctrine of evolution collapses like an empty bubble.

So in revelation there has been a true development: the Bible like a rare flower has been unfolding in the light of heaven. First there was only the mere bud enwrapped in the crude calyx, but sepal after sepal expanded, revealing new loveliness, and then the petals unrolled as the ages passed until the splendid corolla in its matchless beauty greeted the eyes of men, and is filling the earth with its cheering and exhilarating aroma. New beauties are constantly being revealed, and with a deeper meaning even than Paul had, we say: "For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, ye

received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God."

Glance at some of the methods employed to bolster up the views of these critics. First, in the matter of the names given to God, the Elohist is credited with Gen. 22:1-14, yet the name Jehovah occurs in v. 14 as though even the Higher Critic dare not make mincemeat of the sublime story of the offering up of Isaac. In Gen. 27:20, Jehovah occurs in an Elohist narrative and again in Ex. 14:10. In Ex. 3:14, given by Driver to the priestly code, Elohim says, I am Jehovah. Could confusion be worse confounded? The Deity is referred to in Deuteronomy by precisely the same names as in the previous books, but Deuteronomy is declared by these men to be the work of one man whom they call D. A very curious specimen of the difficulties besetting this theory, which is based on the distinctions between the names of the Deity, is found in Gen. 17:1-3 where all three names, Yaveh (Jehovah), Elohim and El-Shaddai, are given to God. To argue, then, that a different name for God, used by the writer, indicates a different author leads to the most ridiculous absurdities.

The argument based on the style of diction is just as unsatisfactory. E. is said to be didactic and J. to be popular and flowing. Within this generation we have had examples enough of the inability of English scholars to determine the authorship of even English productions. Junius has not yet been clearly identified, and the conflict about Shakespeare and

Bacon rages still in some quarters. Who, then, will pretend that the modern Hebraists, poring over their lexicons and running to Jewish Rabbis with their perplexities of syntax, are competent to distinguish subtleties of style three thousand years old? It is arguing in a circle to decide that J. is picturesque, then when you come to a bald passage assign it to some one else. Let P. have a fondness for forms, then assign all formal phrases to him. If a passage arises that will not yield to this treatment, call it an interpolation, as Dr. Briggs does with Matt. 25:46: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," etc. "Why," we ask, "do you call that an interpolation?" He answers, "Jesus never said that, it must be one of the disciples or scribes who wrote it in," and he assumes that his *ipse dixit* alone should decide it. Again, look at the ground on which so much is made of discrepancies in the Scriptures. It sounds alarming to say that there are one hundred and fifty thousand various readings in the New Testament, but Ezra Abbott shows us that we must dismiss nineteen-twentieths of these as supported by so little authority that no critic would regard them as having any claim to consideration. This leaves 7,500, but these 5,200 do not affect the sense. They relate merely to questions of orthography, the order of the words and similarly insignificant matters. This reduces the number to 2,160 which involve differences of meaning often very slight, and our critical helps are so abundant that in nearly all of

them we are able to determine the true text with a great degree of confidence, and no Christian doctrine or duty rests on these portions of the text affected by differences in the MSS. Still less is anything vital to Christianity touched by these various readings.

Or, look at the reasons assigned for thinking that Deuteronomy, etc., were post-exilic in their origin. Was the finding of the roll by Hilkiah really a discovery of something which had been hidden since the death of Hezekiah and now in the providence of God brought to light once more, or was it a forgery and a fraud? Those who would have us believe that the book of the law was a copy of Deuteronomy, and that it was a concoction of the reign of Manasseh or Josiah, tell us that the fabricators were actuated by a high sense of zeal for the worship of Jehovah, while yet, in defiance of the third commandment recorded in that book they proceed to profane that most holy name for the purposes of their forgery. On this view, Deuteronomy, save on the ground of literary excellence, falls into the same category as the apocryphal books and the false decretals. It is an attempt to bolster up a religious cause and a priestcraft by the free use of false statements backed by what profess to be the direct utterances of God. Ewald maintains that it might have been written thirty or forty years before its discovery by an exile from Egypt who had fled hither from Manasseh's persecution. Thus we are to suppose that it might have been slowly circulated and had reached Palestine by chance, and a copy of it



may have been accidentally found by the high priest. This, while appearing to get rid of the charge of fraud, builds on a frail chapter of accidents. Wellhausen becomes very plain and emphatic, and says: "In all circles where appreciation of scientific results can be looked for at all, it is recognized that Deuteronomy was composed in the same age in which it was discovered. Reuss declares: "It is a book which was pretended to have been found in the Temple."

Kuenen says: "If Hilkiāh found the book in the Temple, it was put there by the adherents of the Mosaic tendency, or else Hilkiāh himself was of the number, and in that case he pretended that he had found the book of the Law." Driver attempts to be more reverent, and says: "It is improbable that Hilkiāh was concerned in the composition of the book of the Law," but he adopts the theory that it is of the age of Manasseh. He holds that Deuteronomy does not claim to have been written by Moses, because the author speaks in the third person, but the same argument would deny to Cæsar the authorship of the Commentaries, and to Virgil the authorship of the Georgics. Dr. Driver contends that Deuteronomy is the work of an unknown author, living probably in the reign of Josiah, who was anxious to impress on the people the duty of more strictly observing their national religion, and for this purpose he pretended that it was written by Moses, thinking this would have more effect, a process similar to a man who, wishing to pay his creditors in full, writes out a cheque upon a

bank, but fearing lest his own name should not commend itself sufficiently to the bankers, signs his master's name instead. Such deeds are denoted by a rather ugly name, nor is the goodness of the object in view considered a justification of the act. And we naturally ask, how does Dr. Driver know this? He can know nothing of the matter but what he learns from the books themselves. He assumes, therefore, the very point in dispute, and a more unfounded assumption was never made. Not a scintilla of evidence is ever offered; we are merely told that anyone who claims to be scientific can see it at a glance. Prof. Cheyne suggests that to the priests and prophets who loved spiritual religion, God had revealed that now was the time to take a bold step forward and accomplish the work which the noblest servants of God had so long desired; and accordingly, to ancient laws adapted to present purposes they added new ones framed in the spirit of Moses. These had apparently been placed in a repository beside the ark, and there Hilki'ah professed to Shaphan to have found it. Yet he professes indignantly that it is wrong to charge Hilki'ah with being the forger of Deuteronomy. But what can we say? He clearly makes God the instigator of this unpardonable fraud.

There can be no escape from the conclusion that if Deuteronomy be of that age, then, gloss it by what gentle term we please, the book is a forgery. It professes again and again to be the work of Moses; repeatedly it brings in the solemn declaration,

"Jehovah said unto me." What evidence is there in the story of the discovery that substantiates this impious claim? There is not a stray allusion either in Kings or Chronicles suggestive of any guilty knowledge on Hilkiab's part. The fraud exists in the imagination alone of these ingenious critics. Here was a forgery too clumsy to escape detection under the searching eye of modern critics, yet sufficiently well done to have misled mankind for centuries and to have induced them to accept as divine oracles, inventions devised by Jewish Rabbis of the sixth and following centuries B.C., in order to strengthen their own influence, and it was not until our times that men sufficiently acute arose to detect these frauds. It is not necessary that I should detain you by proving that Deuteronomy claims to have been produced by Moses. There are nearly two hundred such claims put forward in the book itself, and we must accept its testimony or else deny its right altogether to be considered a religious book. Neither is it necessary that I should weary you by showing you that almost every writer in the Old Testament accepted the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. More than thirty times in the historical books alone the Law is mentioned, and in fifteen instances is ascribed to Moses. All through the prophetic books are allusions and quotations to the same effect. Canon Cheyne, in his "Isaiah," gives fifty passages in which the Pentateuch is alluded to. Joel, the earliest of the prophets, as is generally thought (B.C. 900-800), is

full of this conception. He knows nothing of a fragmentary Torah, nor any author but Moses. From Joshua to Malachi there is a line of unbroken evidence for the existence and authorship of the Mosaic writings. The oldest of the prophets seems as familiar with them as the latest. If the Pentateuch was written after 800 B.C., then Joel must have been acquainted with what was not in existence. If such fragments as J.E. or P. had ever existed, it is impossible to believe that some reference would not have been made to them either by enemies or friends during the long millennium through which they continued to be the only religious standards of Israel. Yet their names are never mentioned, nor their works referred to. The high morality and noble conceptions of religion in the Pentateuch are such that none save a man like Moses could have written it. Had there been another besides Moses capable of producing it, the whole world would have known who he was. His fame and name could not have remained forever hidden.

Let us go a step farther. Our Lord himself sanctioned and endorsed the view of the traditionalists, as it is called. To deny it, therefore, is to undermine the authority of Christ as teacher and Lord. It is not, then, a mere question of literary criticism; the divinity and veracity of our Lord are involved. The Pentateuch and the Gospels stand or fall together. Huxley says: "There certainly is no ground for contending for the authenticity of the New Testament,

if the Old Testament is thus shown to be the product of a post-exilic age. We must recognize the alternative, that either the Pentateuch is essentially Mosaic in its origin, as Christ again and again pronounced it to be, or else that His utterances on the subject are of such a character that we could not long hold consistently to His claims as divine." Christ refers more than four hundred times to these Scriptures. His Bible was identical with our Old Testament. The Sermon on the Mount frequently calls attention to the Law. When He came down from the mount He bade the leper go show himself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded. He mentions conspicuous personages whose histories are given in the Pentateuch—Adam, Noah, Lot, and Jacob. He refers to leading events and customs recorded there, such as creation, marriage, Sabbath, death of Abel, deluge, burning bush, Exodus, commandments, Sinaitic code, and fate of Lot's wife. Further, in regard to divorce and marriage with a deceased brother's widow, He affirms that Moses originated these customs. To His disciples on the way to Emmaus, "beginning with Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." In John's Gospel he refers to Jacob's vision, the serpent in the wilderness, the manna, and to their father Abraham. In John 7: 19, He asks, "Did not Moses give you the law?" and in v. 2 He declares that circumcision was given by Moses. His ministry commenced with the announcement, "Think

not that I have come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law until all be fulfilled." If Christ used the term law then in the sense that these critics would have us use it, and in which they say He did, then He deceived the people, for they knew no other use of the expression than as referring to the Torah, the law book, the writings of Moses. Christ declares that Moses was the giver of the law, that he wrote of himself, and on the occasion of the transfiguration, Moses stood with Him. If Moses was a mere myth, how then could he appear with Elijah and talk with Christ. How long will it be before the transfiguration, too, will be called a myth? If it was a real occurrence, as Peter and John affirm, then Moses was as real as either of the persons there assembled, and his existence and relation to Christ is put beyond all cavil. If he was not there, except in the imagination of the disciples, then the New Testament must fall with the Old, and the chief figures in its pages must be consigned to the list of earth's basest deceivers or earth's most sadly deceived men. If possible, the case is stronger when Deuteronomy is concerned. On three different occasions our Lord spake of this book in such a way as to convey the idea that He accepted the Mosaic origin of it. "He wrote of me," He declared at a feast, referring to the well-known prophecy of Deuteronomy 18: 15: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee

a prophet in the midst of these thy brethren, like unto me. Unto him shall ye hearken." "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he testified of me." "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Again, during His temptation He cited most exactly and solemnly two passages from Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5, words which are given in Deuteronomy as those of Moses. His use of them in so awful a connection makes it impossible for us to think that He knew them to be a forgery. There can be no question but that our Lord believed, and wished others to believe, that Moses had lived and written by divine command the books which bear his name.

How is this sought to be met? These men tell us that the human limitations of Christ in the incarnate state were such that He did not know any more about the past than He could learn from the Rabbis of His time. This is the strange fiction of the kenosis, the emptying of himself, who said in the flesh, "I and my Father are one." If Christ knew no more than He learned at school and at home and picked up in conversation, we cannot go to Him for authoritative teaching. If the divine within Him was subject to such overshadowing as these critics assume, then may He not have been wrong in any of His teachings about His own personality, mission, atonement, power to forgive sin and save men, and His mediatorial office? Any or all may be ascribed to some limitation of His knowledge. Where can we stop? Are we to



sacrifice the whole fabric of Christianity to this idol of kenotism?

Some critics, it is true, feel the force of these arguments and attempt to fence them off by suggesting that Christ did not know who was the author of the Pentateuch, but that He simply believed what every one else believed in regard to the matter. He lived nearly two millenniums nearer Moses and the prophets than we do, but He could not enter into the spirit of their writings so deeply as we can. He lived when Hebrew was practically a living tongue and probably spoke a dialect of it, but He could not appreciate its subtleties so finely as the Hebraists of our colleges. He belonged to a race which venerated their sacred books so that they could not allow the omission of a yod or accent in the recitals of them, and yet He was totally unaware that the Old Testament reeked with errors and contradictions. Apart from His divinity being such a man as He was, Christ could not have been subject to all these errors and defects.

This curious and novel theory of the kenosis is based on such passages as Phil. 2:7, where it is said that the Son of God made himself of no reputation (literally, emptied himself) and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. But this kenosis in reality was merely the laying aside of His glory, so that it should not be displayed to the bewilderment of men. The very context declares that He was still in the form of God. If He divested himself of all divine attributes, then

He was no longer divine and the incarnation is a delusion. Christ still, however, possessed the Spirit without measure. He was still one with the Father. He knew what was in man. He knew the Father as no one save the Son could know Him. He was God manifest in the flesh. In Him dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He had power over nature, as His miracles testify. He knew the future, as His prophecies show. The Father and the Spirit declared Him to be divine. The only passage where it could possibly be suspected that any limitation to His knowledge is taught in the Scriptures, is that which refers to His not knowing the day and hour of the final judgment (Matt. 24 : 36), but the expression both in Greek and Hebrew is well known to mean not that He did not know, but that He did not make known or reveal. It was one of those things which men were not prepared to hear. God never makes His revelations known prematurely for all our curiosity. But others suggest that it was not His special mission to correct these things, any more than to correct the erroneous conceptions of science then prevailing, that He accommodated himself to the prejudices and ignorance of the times in these matters. Why? Were these prejudices and ignorance a state of bliss which had better not be disturbed? No teacher worthy of the name would take such a position. And such a degrading representation of Christ must be repudiated by every reverent and intelligent man.

What could be gained by it? He could not have

been more scornfully rejected or cruelly treated than He was. What are the facts? He sternly opposed all traditions and customs that made the Word of God of none effect. He condemned in scathing words all hypocrisy and casuistry, and He was slain for doing so. It is true that some of the critics seek to evade the most disastrous issues of their speculations by taking what they call the Christocentric standpoint. As though to regard Christ as the centre and object of revelation covered a multitude of defects and errors in the form of that revelation! But we know Christ only by means of the Bible. Therefore, either the Bible must be reliable or we have no Christ. The influence of Christianity has all along been, and still is, exerted by Bible teaching, and, therefore, any Christocentric theory that is independent of an accurate and trustworthy Bible is a delusion and a fiction. And if the doctrines of Christ as given in the Bible are taken as the foundation of the Christocentric theory, then the testimony concerning the Old Testament must be regarded as part of that foundation.

One need scarcely dwell on the testimony of the Apostles. Peter in his epistles quotes from every book of the Pentateuch, and affirms that no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but that holy men spake from God, being inbreathed by the Holy Ghost. Paul told Agrippa that he taught nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come. He persuaded the people concerning Jesus both from the

law of Moses and from the prophets. James and John add their testimony. If Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch the apostles were not inspired. They knew not what they said. They can command no confidence.

It is worse than idle to say, as a sermon published during the year in the *Guardian* said, "A new Old Testament as much more vital and interesting and suggestive than the old as the rose unfolding in dewy fragrance from the bud is different from the rose of wax or marble," as appeared as a result of Higher Criticism." That is poetic gush and hysterical rhapsody. Look at it. Which critic gives us this vital conception? No two of them agree. Is it so beautiful to think that words which we believed came from the majestic and inspired Founder of the Jewish national system, were the fraudulent production of a post-exilic age, or the fragmentary writings of an unknown J. or E. or D. or P., and form a tissue of pious deception and legendary fancies?

All this is buttressed by the *Testimony of the Monuments*.

Prof. Sayce, of Oxford, said recently: "The most uncompromising opponents of the results of the Higher Criticism are to be found in the ranks of the foremost students of Assyrian and Egyptian antiquity. In truth, those of us who have devoted our lives to the archæology of the ancient Oriental world have been forced back into the traditional position. Year by year, almost month by month, fresh discoveries

are breaking in upon us, each more marvellous than the last, but all as regards the Pentateuch in favor of the old rather than the new teaching." In opposition to the claim that Moses and Israel were semi-barbarous, he says: "We have learned not that Moses could have written the Pentateuch, but that it would have been something like a miracle if he had not done so. For he lived in a literary age." We have now more than three hundred letters written before Moses was born. Prof. Fritz Hommel, of Munich, scarcely second to Prof. Sayce in authority, says in regard to the Tel-el-Amarna tablets: "They brush aside the cobweb theories of the so-called Higher Critics of the Pentateuch, and place us in the position from which no future attack of sceptical criticism can hope to dislodge us." "The theory of Higher Criticism must collapse inevitably, and the fact that the critics still persist in holding their views against this indisputable evidence to the contrary, we can only regard as additional proof of the hopeless bankruptcy of their theories."

The truth of history cannot be determined by philological speculation and arbitrary assumptions. The archæological method is the method of science. Until we can compare the statements of literary history with the facts revealed by contemporaneous monuments, we have no scientific means for testing their truthfulness. Herodotus rejected the assertion of the Phœnician sailors who circumnavigated Africa, because they claimed that for a part of the time they had the

sun on their right, and a part of the time on their left. But that is just the statement that modern science regards as proof of the truthfulness of the story. The adherents of the Higher Criticism claim the monopoly of criticism, and will not allow any methods but theirs. But the criticism they mean is speculative and visionary, and is based on fancies and presuppositions and not on facts. The discovery of the famous Tel-el-Amarna tablets was greeted at first by literary criticism with its customary scepticism. They were called forgeries, but that position is no longer tenable. Take, as an example, the discoveries of Mr. Pinches in a cuneiform text of the names of Chedorlaomer and his allies, which are recorded in Gen. 15. "Kudur-Laghamar" is called King of Elam, and we are told that he oppressed Babylonia and even attempted to destroy the temple of Bel in Babylon, and all through the text the names and the political situation are the same as in the Genesis narrative. Literary criticism had decided that the account in Genesis was mythical and unhistorical, that the names were etymological fictions, and that the idea of a Babylonian expedition to Palestine in the age of Abram was suggested by the campaigns of the later Assyrian monarchs. Consequently it was necessary to deny the archæological facts. Mr. Pinches and his brother Assyriologists were told by the literary critics, who could not decipher a single cuneiform character themselves, that their readings were mistaken, and that Kudur-Laghamar, Tidal, Amraphel and

Arioch were all creatures of their own brains. It was triumphantly demonstrated and repeated in various journals that the name Kudur-Laghamar had a wholly different pronunciation. This statement was soon met by Dr. Schiel, a French Assyriologist, who found in the Museum at Constantinople letters written by Amraphel himself, in which he refers to Kudur-Laghamar and the Elamite supremacy in Chaldea. In this the name of the Elamite monarch is represented in a way that admits of no dispute. Literary criticism then took a new tack. The reading of the names was admitted, but it was held that the cuneiform documents contain no account of Abraham, and that a fragment of Babylonian history had been introduced by the Biblical writer into a mass of fiction. It is held by many of the Higher Critics that Abram is a myth, a mere idea around which tradition has entwined certain legends during the lapse of time. But the names of Abram, Jacob, Joseph, Ishmael and Sarah appear in the contract tablets. Mr. Gore says in "Lux Mundi" that the first three chapters of Genesis are mythical. But we cannot forget that 30,000 tablets have been exhumed at Nineveh, many of them copies of still older inscriptions, dating back, according to G. Smith, 2,500 years B.C. These older tablets are of Accadian origin, (Accad is mentioned in Gen. 10:10), and in many important points corroborate the Mosaic account of the Creation and the Fall of man. Everyone may see the Deluge tablets in the British Museum. Trans-



lations are most common. It represents Noah rehearsing the story of the flood to Nimrod. It is copied from a tablet dating back at least 4,000 years. It has been preserved by the enemies of the Jews, who would not have been likely to do anything to substantiate the Hebrew Scriptures. Every detail of the Mosaic narrative is corroborated with minute accuracy, and these hoary monuments confirm the Hebrew annals. The account given in Gen. 10:8-10 of Nimrod receives remarkable corroboration from inscriptions on monuments exhumed in Mesopotamia. The story of the Hittites is marvellous as told by them. It was a mere Biblical name two decades ago, and indeed the accuracy of the scripture narrative was questioned, on the ground that no such people had ever existed. But Dr. Schlieman has brought to light from the great past specimens of the art and literature of that people, which now crowd the British Museum. The oldest Accadian tablets of Sargon the First prove the Hittites to have been colonizers and conquerors long before. A most fascinating volume has been written by Dr. W. Wright, showing their character and their history, and proving beyond reasonable doubt that Abraham came into contact with them. And the promises given to him that he should possess their land, and the declaration which Moses heard at the burning bush, all receive a strengthening meaning from these long-buried records of a forgotten empire. One interesting inscription

on an obelisk now in the British Museum enables us to decide that Baalam was a Hittite.

Among the papyri there is a poem by Pentaur which relates the victories of Rameses II., whose sister rescued Moses, and whose very language shows an exact counterpart of the Mosaic mode of speech.

Or turn to Abraham, the myth, the idea, as he is called. The name Abram—the exalted father—occurs often on these Babylonian tablets. Sarah or Sarat, meaning queen, and Milcah, princess, the daughter of Haran, are also met with. The site of Ur of the Chaldees has been identified and its ruins excavated. The kings Abram overthrew are named. Antiquarian research confirms the narrative of the destruction of the cities of the plain. And the explorers, though sceptical at first, say that after twenty-two days of close investigation they became unanimous in the conviction of the truth of the scriptural account of the destruction of the cities of the plain.

The long toil of Israel under the burdens of slavery has been fully substantiated by the discovery of the very unstrawed bricks they made, stamped with the name of Rameses II., and the treasure cities which they built, spoken of in Ex. 1:11, have been discovered at Tel-el-Kebir. Paintings on the walls represent Rameses slaying his enemies and reveal the very violence and cruel temperament which the Mosaic narrative depicts. Who the king was that knew not Joseph has been made clear by the Tel-el-Amarna

tablets, and the condition of the Israelites is vividly described. The name Moses is shown to be purely Egyptian, and means "son," a very appropriate name for the adopted son of an Egyptian princess. Such names could not have been invented at a later period, when the Israelites were settled in Palestine, and these very stones cry out in vindication of the sacred record and the traditional view.

I cannot linger longer here, nor is it necessary. Sufficient has been referred to to show that the authorship and authenticity of the Pentateuch are buttressed by proof so unassailable that like a rock it stands unmoved by the hurtling storm or surging waves of rationalistic criticism and materialistic animosity.

There is, however, no cause to fear that the citadel of truth will be taken. Already the tide seems to be turning; the master-minds of Europe are flinging aside these ill-founded theories and reverting to former positions, and those who seem to think it a proof of superior intellectuality to be of their way of thinking will doubtless follow them in their retreat, and out of it all the Scriptures will shine with increased beauty and lustre. Once I passed an old fort on the outskirts of Paris soon after the siege of the Prussians, where I saw sticking in the wall the shells thrown there by the German artillery. To me they did not mar the grandeur of the massive fort or disfigure the splendor of that solid masonry. Nay, rather they seemed to add to its beauty, and to hang

there as proofs of its marvellous strength. So I believe that these very attacks will serve to show the impregnability of, this rock of inspiration, and through it men will see more and more that holy men of old wrote as they were inbreathed by the Holy Spirit; that He lighted upon them, took possession of them, moved within them, constrained them and controlled them as the media through which He would speak to men. "As a skilful musician called alone to execute some masterpiece, puts his lips by turns to the mournful flute, the shepherd's reed, the mirthful pipe, and the trumpet of war," so the Almighty to sound in our ears His eternal life-giving Word has played upon the varied idiosyncrasies of men, and given us in the great Anthem of Revelation, the sublime simplicity of John, the soul-stirring energy of Paul, the fervid eloquence of Peter, the poetic grandeur of Isaiah, the sweet lyrics of David, and the majestic narratives of Moses. However various the instruments He employs they are all harmonized by one mind, swept by one master-hand, and demonstrate the great truth that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, correction and reproof; for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

What has been said of the Pentateuch may also be said of Isaiah. The unity of the book is becoming more and more apparent. In the *Expositor*, Prof. D. S. Margoliouth, M.A., of Oxford, is contributing a

series of articles on "Lines of Defence of the Biblical Revelation"; and in the May number and the previous one contends with much force for the unity of the authorship of the book of Isaiah as against plurality. His arguments briefly stated, are:

1. The external evidence is uniformly favorable to single authorship.

2. The theory which bisects Isaiah leads to further and further dissection.

3. The geography of the latter part is earlier than Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

4. The idolatrous practices rebuked in the second part are pre-exilian rites.

The Holy Scriptures seem to me to stand like a mighty temple built through the rolling centuries, after a heaven-conceived plan. The mind of the great Architect stands revealed in every part. Just as the angle of the loftiest spire is determined in its first layer of stone and persists throughout to the tapering finger that points to the heavens, so this temple has been rising grand and fair. Its mighty foundations were, in the morning of time, formed of great indestructible blocks of self-evident truth.

There was the foundation of Monotheism. The foundation of man's creation in the image of God, which flashes and glows with God's Fatherhood and man's sonship, with God's sovereignty and man's debt of loyalty; which scintillates with the truths of the unity of the race and the equality of all men; the foundation of the family with its hallowed sanctities

and its holy monogamy; the foundation of the Sabbath, the moral, spiritual, physical and physiological demand of human and divine nature; the foundation of the Decalogue, the ten words which lie at the root of all wise and beneficent legislation: on these foundations have arisen splendid spires of hope, the hope of redemption, the hope of pardon, the hope of immortality, and eternal felicity—hopes that chase away human sorrows, that give life a new meaning and a loftier purpose. Great transepts stretch out, spanned and vaulted by the arches of prophecy, holding the centuries together with a grip of steel. Clustering pinnacles shoot forth, the pinnacles of joy, peace, prayer, and praise, and there is the holy place, the great central altar on which lay and beside which now stands the Great High Priest of our profession.

“Every star about him wheels,  
Every penitent he heals;  
Higher than the highest, he,  
Son and Soul of Deity.”

There the Shekinah abides, the wondrous paraclete making every stone of truth flash with a holy light, until they seem to us to be transformed into emeralds, crysolites, beryls, and calcedonies of peerless beauty, and ever revealing some new splendor, some long-hidden loveliness. It is, as we live in that temple and join its holy litanies and bask in the light of its presiding genius, that we are able to behold its beauty



and apprehend its sublime truths. Nor should this be thought strange, for no man can hear more of the sweet oratorio, Messiah, than he has of Messiah in him. No one perhaps ever heard it as Handel heard it, and he heard it only in his own soul. Every rendering of it in his presence was unsatisfactory, and he would turn to the great choir and impatiently, in broken English, cry, "Loudaire! you do not understand." So as our hearts are filled with the spirit of the Bible, the Spirit of God, this holy book will glow with richer light and throb with deeper meaning, and we shall see what Paul meant when he said: "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, but he that is spiritual discerneth all things."